

Mawddī and Amīn Aḥsan Islāhī. Irfan repeatedly stressed, in addition to his elucidation in the “Introduction,” the need to study all the statements of a *sūrah* as an integral whole. His interpretation of the doctrine of abrogation in the Qur’ān is also unique. He considers abrogation (*naskh*) “as the experience of the Companions of the Prophet” at a time when the Qur’ān was still being revealed. This issue, therefore, need not be addressed. Instead, the Qur’ān should be looked at as a divine discourse to human beings in classical Arabic language. To understand the Qur’ān, it is necessary to look at it as a coherent whole.

The language used in the *Reflections* is very lucid and the style is informal, simple and touching. It attempts to unravel the Qur’ānic wisdom in the contemporary idiom, and relates divine guidance to modern man’s condition. *Reflections on the Qur’ān* will be useful for teachers, students, and scholars alike and should be included in the curricula of Qur’ānic studies. It will also be well-received if the work is translated into other world languages. It is hoped that the learned author would continue the work to cover the remaining 112 chapters.

Perspectives on Management and Organization. By Abbas J. Ali. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2005, pp. 260 + viii. ISBN 1 84376 766 X

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Islamic approach to management and organization is of recent origin and Muslim scholars are in the forefront putting in their best efforts to widen the horizons of Islamization of knowledge including the Islamization of management science. *Islamic Perspectives on Management and Organization* is the latest and commendable effort to approach Management and Organization from an Islamic perspective. It fills the gap in the literature by reflecting on the rich resources and ideas displayed during the early centuries after the inception of Islam. It covers issues related to Islamic assumptions

about organization and management and assists readers to understand the challenges in managing corporations that operate in an Islamic environment.

As expected, the work is based upon the two divine sources: the Qurʾān and the *Sunnah*. Recognising the variation in the understanding of Islam by Muslims, the author focuses on non-controversial aspects of Islam. The book has eleven chapters and it discusses such important topics as Business and Trade, Human Nature and Motivation, Islamic school of Thought, Islamic work ethics and Values, Function of Groups, Power and Authority, Decision Style, Leadership, Organization Structure, Human Resources and Organizational Development and Change. These factors are interrelated and are the key to organizational success and enhanced productivity. These factors have been discussed from both the Western and Islamic perspectives. The Islamic perspective, which according to the author is more complex and dynamic, receives well-deserved treatment. The author explains Islam in detail in elucidating the main interests of the book, namely, management and organization. Relying on classic interpretations of organizational issues without ignoring contemporary thought, the author uses original sources and other references to highlight the orientations and practices that lead to superior performance in a Muslim environment. He identifies both organizational and societal attributes that are essential for effective relationships at the workplace that promote organisational effectiveness and efficiency.

The book is historical and descriptive in nature. After a brief description of the social, economic and political conditions of the pre-Islamic Arabia, the author explains the Islamic framework of values including the unity of God, fasting, prayers, almsgiving, prejudice and discrimination, abuse of power, rivalry and collective punishment and the centrality of commerce in Islamic thinking. It sheds light on the Islamic work ethic and values such as pursuing legitimate business, earning wealth in a legitimate way, honest effort, fair competition, transparency and morally-responsible conduct.

The author also discusses the structure and functions of groups, their effectiveness, mission and leadership. The author offers a healthy connection between contemporary writings on leadership in general with Islamic principles and examples of Muslim leadership

from the Islamic legacy. He cites Prophet Muhammad (SAS) as the leader worthy of emulation because “under his leadership, profound cultural and political changes took place in Arabia” (p. 136). Good leaders instil values in their organization and management style. There are numerous challenges in modern management development vis-a-vis contemporary business environment of today’s organizations. Leaders, according to the author, must infuse Islamic core values in the organization to face these challenges. A similar message is also evident in the author’s treatment of the organizational structure, human resource management and the organizational development and change. The author rightly emphasises the need to develop a climate of teamwork and mentoring. For those who tend to trust subordinates in their abilities from the beginning, there is beneficial advice as to how to cultivate this ideal when it is not automatically present.

The book is devoid of ambiguity and addresses issues that are essential for management and organisation. However, the author has missed the contribution of Muslim women in the organization. Admittedly, Muslim women had made major contributions to the society in the golden period of Islam. However, circumstances have changed and working conditions have changed. A discussion on scarf and attire, sexual harassments and the like would have enhanced the value of the book. Born in the Arab World and trained in the West, the author’s Islamic perspective is skewed towards the Arab world to the neglect of those living in Southeast and Far East Asia.

The author of the *Perspectives on Management and Organization* is a management expert and has produced a well researched work without any bias. This book is highly recommended for scholars and practitioners of organisation and management as it will certainly broaden their understanding of the Islamic aspects of conducting business and managing the organisation. It could be recommended as a reference material for the lecturers of management as well as to graduate students alike to understand the uniqueness of tactics on organizing and managing the organization from an Islamic perspective. Nevertheless, this is not a text book for which the interested scholars have to search elsewhere.